



OPINION OF TEACHERS AND ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS IN JAWAHAR NAVODAYA VIDYALAYAS TOWARDS MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION –A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to know the opinion of teachers and attitude of students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya towards multicultural education. Multicultural Education is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aims to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial ethnic, social-class and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitude and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate and communicate with people from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common goal. The sample for the study was 52 teachers and 350 students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas from Waynad, Kannur, Kozhikode, Malappuram and Thrissur district. The investigator used an open ended interview schedule for collecting data from teachers and a scale on multicultural Education used for students. Qualitative analysis and 't' test was used for analysis. Study revealed that teachers have a highly favourable opinion and significant difference between male and female students towards multicultural education.

Socialization of students is the major aim of schooling. Education provides new avenues in cultural upbringing. The past knowledge presents a picture of multicultural heritage. The future generation can be socialized through the sharing of insight into complexities of a multicultural society. The level of culture is implicit and shared by students within the groups. The cultural background of an individual changes according to their family. The behavioural pattern, the language, rituals etc defines our social role. Multicultural Education provides the awareness of some social issues like marginalization, globalization economic changes etc. The social discriminations based on gender, caste, colour language etc should be removed through the concept of Multicultural Education. Cultural diversity and civic society providing available potential for social cohesion and participation. Multicultural Education is a process that parameters all aspect of school practices, policies and organization as a means to ensure that highest levels of academic achievement for all students. It helps students to develop a positive self concept by providing knowledge about the histories, culture and combination of diverse groups. It prepares all students to work actively towards structural equality in organization and institution by providing the knowledge, disposition and skills for the redistribution of power and income among diverse groups.

The historical root of multicultural Education lies in the civil rights movements of various historically oppressed groups. Many trace the history of Multicultural Education back to the social action of African American and other people of colour who challenged discriminatory practices in public institutions during civil rights struggles of 1960s. Among those institutions specifically targeted were educational institutions. This was among the most oppressive and hostile to the ideals of racial equality. Activists, community leaders and parents called for curricular reform and insisted on a re examination of hiring practices. Both they demanded, should to be more consistent with the racial diversity in the country. In the late 196000s and early 1970s the women rights movements joined this groups challenged inequalities in employment and educational opportunities as well as income, identifying education as a primary contributing factor in institutionalised and systematic sexism. Feminist scholars and other women activists insisted on curricula more inclusive of their histories and experiences and this made social and educational change into the early 1970s.

The 1980s saw the emergence of a body of scholarships on Multicultural Education activists and researchers who refused to allow schools to their concerns by simply adding token program and special units on famous women or famous people of colour. So as the 1980s flowed into the final decade of the twentieth century, Multicultural education scholars refocused the struggle on developing new approaches and models of education and learning built on a foundation of social justice, critical thinking and equal opportunity. Educators researchers and cultural theorists began to further deconstruct traditional models in both high school and higher education arena from a multicultural framework. Now there are many models and frame works for Multicultural Education exists. While theory and scholarship has moved from small curricular revisions to approaches that call for full transformations of Multicultural Education still began with curricular additions of diverse source. But with a fuller understanding of the roots of the movements it is important to remember the Multicultural Education is a relatively new concept that will continue to change to meet the needs of a constantly changing society.

Globalization leads the Multicultural Education in a global environment. The concept provides children a reorganization of difference as well as similarities

among all people. Multiculturalism refers to the sharing of many cultures. In a globalizing world diversity is visible in all fields including education. Educators should provide more attention to improve a unity among students. Multiculturalism makes clear that each culture have many elements that deserve respect and appreciation.

Future citizens need Multicultural Education for an active participatory citizenship. Multicultural Education advocates the beliefs that students and their life histories and experiences should be placed at the centre of the teaching and learning process and that pedagogy should occur in a context that is familiar to student and that address multiple way of thinking. Multicultural Education is an educational strategy in which students cultures are used to develop effective classroom instruction and school environments. It supports and extends the concepts of culture, diversity, equality, social justice and democracy into the school setting. An examination of these concepts and their practical applications in schools will lead to an understanding of the development and practice of Multicultural Education. The teacher who is enthusiastic about Multicultural Education will be more likely to use multicultural materials and encourages students to develop more egalitarian views. If the teachers fail to understand the cultural factors in addition to the intellectual and physical factors that affect student learning and behaviour, it will be difficult to help the students to learn

In a country like India, where it exhibits greater diversity, the need for understanding and accepting the difference among all people have never been more important. Thus the challenge for educators is to present an effective multicultural education foundation by means of which all children can learn to accept to others. The goal of multicultural education is not only to teach children about other groups or countries, but also help the children to become accustomed to the idea that, there are many life styles, languages, cultures and point of view. Many universities in India are presently opting cultural exchange program in the academic perspectives. The ongoing trend in India shows us a very positive sign which is the increased number of international boarding school in India who ensures the exchange of cultural and tradition through the collaboration with foreign countries. In recent time in India has been witnessing an increase in the flow of foreign student

The present social condition in Kerala shows the need of multicultural awareness. The short immigration of people from northern region to Kerala creates a multicultural society and thereby a multicultural classroom. The short term migration of people from northern states like Bengal, Assam, Bihar etc forced their family to settle here. People living in industrial estate and other agricultural sector are settled here and the education of their children is a problem. These pupil have different cultural outlook, languages, food habit, belief etc create multicultural classroom. These differences among them become barriers to classroom activities. Here arises the need of collaborative activities. By implementing diverse classroom activity and classroom management etc providing a multicultural environment. It refers to the sharing of many cultures (Rajalakshmi, 2014).

In the present scenario, the multicultural Educational system has begun to set its trends in Kerala. Prominent universities in Kerala have opened their doors to multicultural education system, which includes adaption and chronological analysis of educational systems of other places. Many universities in Kerala are presently opting cultural exchange programme in the academic perspective. The need and significance of this study could be said as, cultural exchange

programmes serve as an important means of introducing people around the world to ideas they might not normally be exposed to. Ongoing trend in Kerala shows us a very positive sign which is increased number of students who endure the exchange of cultural and traditions through the collaboration with students from other countries and states. Though this educational system has a prominent growth, but no relevant studies in this regard have been done. As Kerala has been chosen as a plot for this study, the role played by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas is inevitably great as they are conducting student exchange programmes successfully over many years. So the investigator decided to find out the opinion of teachers and attitude of students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas towards multicultural Education.

Objective:

To study the opinion of teachers in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas towards Multicultural Education.

To study the extent of attitudes of secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas towards multicultural Education.

To find whether there exist any significant difference in the mean scores of attitude of secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas towards Multicultural Education with respect to their Gender.

Methodology:

Sample and Design:

The study was carried out on a representative sample of 52 teachers and 350 students from Wayanad, Kannur, Kozhikode, Malappuram and Thrissur districts of Kerala. Survey method was adopted.

Tool:

Interview Schedule for teachers (Bindhu & Samad 2014)

This was an open-ended interview schedule with ten questions. The schedule included details about the knowledge construction, role of teacher, teaching strategy, equity pedagogy and prejudice reduction. In open form of questions in which the subject is encouraged to answer in his/her own words is likely to provide greater depth of response.

Scale on Multicultural Education (Bindhu & Samad, 2014)

This was a five point scale with 35 items (Positive and negative) including the five dimensions of Multicultural Education i.e., Content integration, Knowledge Construction process, Prejudice reduction, Equity pedagogy and Empowering school culture and social structure. Cronbach Alpha was a statistical technique used to determine the reliability of the tool and the reliability coefficient is 0.93 and establishing the face and content validity of the scale.

Statistical Techniques

Qualitative analysis and Test of significance of difference between means (t) are the techniques used for analysis.

Analysis and Discussions

Opinion of teachers towards Multicultural Education

Interview was conducted among twenty three males and twenty nine female teachers. After conducting the interview among all the fifty two teachers, the investigator came to a conclusion that all teachers have a highly favourable opinion towards multicultural education. All of them had same opinion regarding the questions asked. Thus it can be concluded that the randomly selected fifty two teachers had same opinion regarding multicultural education. Teachers of all subjects including those participated in the cultural exchange programme and those with different teaching experience had a same favourable opinion towards multicultural education.

Extent of attitude of Secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya students towards Multicultural Education.

The extent of the variable attitude of secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya towards Multicultural Education in the total sample was established by calculating the mean score and it is presented in the following table 1.

Table :1 Mean score of attitude of secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas towards Multicultural Education

Variable	Mean Score
Attitudes towards Multicultural Education	143.93

The above table revealed that the mean score of attitude of secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya towards multicultural Education for the total sample is 143.93, which is greater than neutral value (105) which means that Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya students have a high favourable attitude towards Multicultural Education.

Comparison of attitudes of Secondary students in Jawahar Navodaya Comparison of the mean score of attitude of secondary school Vidyalaya towards Multicultural Education based on Gender.

For comparing the attitudes of secondary school students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya towards Multicultural Education is presented in the Table 2.

Table 2: Data and result of "t" test of attitude of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya secondary school students towards Multicultural Education based on Gender.

variable	Category	Number	mean	SD	"t" value	Significant level
Attitudes towards Multicultural Education	Male	168	140.65	17.50	3.58	S*
	Female	182	146.95	15.25		

From the table it is revealed that the "t" value obtained with respect to gender is 3.58, which is greater than the tabulated value of "t" and it is significant both at 0.01 and 0.05 level and female students have higher attitude on multicultural education than male students.

Conclusion

Multicultural Education renews vitality of society through the richness of the different cultures of its members and fosters development of a broader and more sophisticated view of the world. Within multicultural Education, the organization and practice of a school recognize and accommodate all students and families. Teaching methods are altered according to the learning styles of students. Language differences are respected and parents are included in school planning and events. The grouping practices of the school revised to allow all students to participate and excel in challenging courses.

Teachers are considered as a great agent of social development. The present study may help the teachers to grasp the world realities of today's world and become an agent of change. The integration of Multicultural Education curriculum helps teachers to critically analyze oppression and power relations in their communities, society and the world. Modules and courses on Multicultural education should be made compulsory in teacher training programmes at institutions of higher learning. The initial focus should be on persuading student teachers to actively assess their perceptions of learners from diverse backgrounds. It therefore becomes necessary that all educators be provided with adequate, appropriate and effective training and guidance in all aspects of Multicultural Education.

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